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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

TOWN HALL MEETING IN CHICAGO

The SPEAKER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that the resistance to this President and his policies is growing in America's heartland. If the 1,200 people who came to my townhall meeting in Chicago on Monday night are any indication, there is a movement in the United States that is standing up to the fear, the racism, the lies, and the divisiveness that comes from the President, his people, and his Twitter account every single day.

The Logandale School auditorium and gym was packed. No, not like The National Mall on Inauguration Day with wide-open spaces and the President's imaginary crowd of 1.5 million people. No, my townhall was actually packed like The Mall on the day after the inauguration for the Women's March. It was a diverse crowd of people who care about America and defending their country. It was overwhelming.

We had Ahmed Rehab, the inspirational leader of CAIR-Chicago, talking about what was going on in Chicago to resist the President's new and unim-

proved ban on refugees and Muslims. He was joined by Equality Illinois, Planned Parenthood, and the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, talking about how the people of Chicago are coming together to resist the President's attacks on women's health, on LGBTQ rights, on public schools and education, on women's rights, and on the environment.

It was the intersection of all of the communities and the issues that are under attack by President Trump and his co-President Bannon. This townhall was the mother of all intersectionality events—right there in Chicago, in America's heartland.

No, they were not paid activists. They were ordinary people trying to get answers and defend their community against an unprecedented threat coming from the White House and Republicans in Congress.

For more than an hour, I answered questions, and then I stayed in the parking lot for another hour and talked with people who still had questions—and some were heartbreaking.

A public school teacher I have known for years asked me how she can help her students. Her kids are being kept out of school or are losing sleep or are displaying signs of depression because of the fear that they have that they will be separated from their parents if they are deported. She wants to comfort them, but the reality is she cannot.

Individuals asked me how they can protect families who are terrified that they will get separated and destroyed.

Just this week, a mother I have known for years who has a stay of deportation and has been regularly reporting to ICE officials for years told me she is being deported in 6 weeks. She has a U.S. citizen husband and four U.S. citizen children, and she has complied with the law and she has complied and reported to authorities, only to be told that, under Trump, the rules

have changed and she is now a top priority for deportation—not because she should be deported, but because she can be deported.

This fear is having an impact on families and children. But what came through to me at the townhall meeting is that families, vulnerable immigrants, and millions of children with a birthright to live as Americans are not alone. There are thousands and thousands of allies who are joining together to defend families in Chicago and everywhere else.

At the townhall on Monday, I appealed for help because this is the very same room that this coming Saturday, Mr. Speaker, my office will be holding a citizenship workshop. I asked those who are already citizens to come and help those who are applying for citizenship, and hundreds of hands went up in the air saying they are ready to help.

We scheduled the citizenship workshop because we are unable to satisfy my constituents' huge demand for citizenship information. Some days we have lines out the door at my office on Fullerton Avenue with people wanting to know: How can I become a citizen of the United States of America?

So all day Saturday, we will have a small army of family defenders trained in citizenship helping their neighbors pursue naturalization and the American Dream. Just as you see the school packed with voters and constituents, you will see the room packed this Saturday with people applying for citizenship to the United States of America and packed with Americans that are already citizens ready to help them.

That is what Chicago is all about, and that is what the heartland is all about, and that is what America is all about.

Women in hijabs and women in pink hats are standing together to fight attacks on Muslims and attacks on women's rights. Environmental activists are joining men and women who fly the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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rainbow flag of the LGBTQ community to resist the President's agenda. The entire community will stand together as the mass deportation wave becomes a day-to-day reality in our communities. And the message is clear: if you come for one of us, you have to go through all of us.

My constituents demanded I be a wrench in Trump's cruel agenda, and I, Mr. Speaker, do not intend to dis-appoint them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

HEALTH CARE FOR MINERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I met last week with a group of West Virginia coal miners who are worried about their future. They are worried about their pensions and healthcare benefits that will expire soon, benefits that they worked their whole life to earn, benefits the Federal Government promised them more than 70 years ago.

During our meeting at the UMWA Career Center in Beckley, I met Preston Thomas of Raleigh County. He spent 36 years in the mines before retiring in 2010. Preston relies on the healthcare benefits he earned to provide prescription drug coverage for his wife. If this coverage is allowed to expire in April, his wife will no longer have access to the medications she needs.

Mr. Speaker, Preston is asking—I am calling on—Congress to keep the promise we made to him, to his fellow miners, to their wives, to their husbands, to their widows. We must pass legislation I have cosponsored to protect these hard-earned benefits.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation and protecting the hardworking miners like Preston. We owe it to all of them to keep our word.

REPUBLICAN ACA REPEAL BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to TrumpCare, the Republican plan to privatize Medicare, penalize working families, and prioritize the wealthy.

The Republican majority is in denial about the tremendous gains of the Affordable Care Act in covering tens of millions of people across this Nation.

In my home State of Washington, Mr. Speaker, because of the Affordable Care Act, the average annual premium increases have dropped from 18.5 percent, before the passage of the ACA, to 6.7 percent in 2017. The growth of indi-

vidual enrollment reached nearly 320,000 people in 2015; and with Medicaid expansion in Washington State, the decline in the uninsured plummeted to 7 percent in 2015, from over 13 percent in 2009. 605,000 Washingtonians also gained coverage through Medicaid expansion.

All of these gains, Mr. Speaker, are in jeopardy as TrumpCare threatens to strip 20 million people, many of whom voted for Mr. Trump, of their health care. Across the Nation, older Americans will be forced to pay premiums five times higher than what others will pay for health care.

Four hundred of the wealthiest families in America will be handed a tax break worth \$7 million a year, all on the backs of working families. According to the Tax Policy Center, under TrumpCare, the top 0.1 percent of earners would receive an average tax cut of \$197,000, while older Americans would face increases of almost \$7,000 each.

Under TrumpCare, many employers will stop providing coverage, letting their employees fend for themselves with a tax credit. Compared to the subsidies that Americans have today, the tax credits will end up being a tax hike.

Not only does TrumpCare impose radical new restrictions on a woman's right to comprehensive health coverage, it defunds Planned Parenthood, robbing women with nowhere else to turn of essential preventative care and affordable contraceptives.

Mr. Speaker, these are sad, sad facts. But the stories from hundreds of my constituents are even more heart-breaking. Lynn told me:

If I were to get a bad illness, it would kill me financially. And the stress alone from having my health insurance taken is causing me health problems already.

Luke wrote to tell me that when his wife needed emergency gall bladder surgery while he was a student, the bills would have been crushing. He said:

Without the ACA, we would have been saddled with nearly \$40,000 in hospital bills, ER, one surgery, and one overnight stay.

Kristy shared:

Without contraceptive care that is covered in the ACA, I would never be able to afford my IUD. I might have an unwanted pregnancy, and I wouldn't be able to afford another child. This means so much to me as a woman, a mother, and as a human. I am able to have power to make decisions about my family, and this means the world to me.

The lessons and stories like this, Mr. Speaker, are what we should be incorporating into our legislative deliberations, not cynical attempts to penalize people for wanting to have basic health insurance coverage for themselves and their families.

What is worse, the Republican majority seems intent on obscuring the real cost of this misguided proposal. Mr. Speaker, the majority deserves this President. They are cut from the same cloth and relying on the power of obfuscating the truth.

Since President Trump is not being forced to be transparent about his taxes or his financial entanglements with foreign interests like Russia, the Republican majority doesn't think that they need to ask the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office to offer the true picture of how many people will be hurt by their bill and how much it will cost the American people. This is simply no way to govern.

At the most fundamental level, health care is a human right and not a luxury, as our Republican colleagues would have us believe; a healthy population is a healthy workforce; a healthy workforce is a healthy economy; and a healthy economy is a healthy nation.

TrumpCare puts all Americans at risk. Let's work together to protect and expand our health care and put this mess behind us.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PATRICK LOWERY COGGINS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a young man from my district, Patrick Lowery Coggins. Pat recently passed away at the young age of 27 after a courageous and lifelong battle with Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

Despite the challenges he faced, Pat lived a full and inspirational life, graduating from high school and college and then returning home to work in communications for the Syracuse Chiefs AAA baseball team.

I had the distinct honor and privilege of meeting Pat when he and his Central New York United teammates won the National Power Wheelchair Soccer Tournament in 2015. Pat and his teammates were incredible advocates for increased opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

And I might add that I got in one of those power wheelchairs and tried to do what Pat did playing soccer, and it was not easy. So I commend him for his skill in that regard as well.

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Pat was beloved by his family, friends, coworkers, and so many in our community. He made a lasting and positive impact on all who knew and loved him.

In Pat's memory, and for all of those who suffer from rare and incurable diseases, we must continue to invest in research, treatments, and cures.

Rest in peace, Pat.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this week, the Food Research & Action Center, known as FRAC, and Feeding